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Saturday May 14, 1977 CG NIDC 77-112C



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National Intelligence Daily Cable for Saturday, May 14, 1977.

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The NID Cable is for the purpose of informing senior US officials.

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PAKISTAN: Referendum

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//Pakistani Prime Minister Bhutto's proposal for a national referendum on his continuation in office appears designed both to gain time and to give him more control over the voting than would be likely in a new parliamentary election resulting from a compromise with his opponents. The US embassy in Islamabad believes that if the referendum takes place, anti-Americanism will remain a part of the Pakistani political picture at least until the vote is held.//

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Yesterday Bhutto told the National Assembly he could not accept the opposition's most recent proposal--basically a reiteration of its original demands for Bhutto's resignation and a new National Assembly election. He proposed instead a "personal referendum" and promised to step aside if he lost.

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Bhutto has apparently concluded that some kind of poll will have to be held, but he is determined to remain in office through that election. He could do so under his proposal; presumably he also would have much more control over both the timing and ground rules of the referendum than he would for a new assembly election. Moreover, to hold the referendum, Bhutto said it would be necessary to amend the constitution--a process that could take as long as Bhutto wants it to.

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The opposition will spell out its response to Bhutto's proposal today, but its acting leader, the Pir of Pagaro, left no doubt yesterday that the response will be negative. An opposition boycott of the vote probably would only guarantee victory for Bhutto at the polls.

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Bhutto appears to be operating on the assumption that as time passes the threat to him will recede. His position, however, remains fragile and depends almost entirely on the opposition's failure to resume an intensive campaign in the streets and on the continued loyalty of the military.

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Pakistan is far calmer than it was a month ago, but the security situation has again begun to deteriorate. The opposition is increasingly aggressive and more willing to demonstrate despite curfews and martial law in the larger cities. Reporting from smaller cities is still fragmentary, but demonstrations apparently occur in some almost daily.

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(S NF) //The government's continuing strong attack against opposition leader and former air force commander Asghar Khan for calling on the military to disobey Bhutto's orders also may reflect widespread unhappiness in the military. Had Asghar's call not met with a favorable response in the army, the government would probably have chosen to ignore his statements.//

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[REDACTED] We believe that mutiny and warfare between army factions are unlikely, in large part because senior officers would abandon Bhutto to end the crisis if they believed either was going to happen. The officers are still reluctant to intervene, but they will come under increasing pressure to do so unless a political solution appears attainable and security does not improve markedly.

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[REDACTED] Soldiers--possibly Punjabis--have fired on Punjabi demonstrators at least twice in Lahore in the past week. It had been assumed that such an incident would quickly bring either a breakdown in army discipline or military intervention to end the crisis, but neither incident was a good test of the assumption. Neither incident involved large numbers of people, and the demonstrators clearly provoked the soldiers to fire in what they may well have felt was self-defense.

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FRANCE: Frictions Among Left

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[] The French Communist Party's publication on Tuesday of the estimated costs and benefits of the common program of the Socialist-Communist alliance has embarrassed the Socialists and handed the governing coalition its first solid issue against the left in some time. In a televised debate with Socialist leader Mitterrand two days later, Prime Minister Barre was able to force Mitterrand into disassociating his party from the Communist estimate, thus making the internal contradictions within the left alliance glaringly evident. Most of the Paris press proclaimed Barre the winner of the debate.

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[] The Communists' motivation in handing the government this unexpected ammunition, and thereby sabotaging Mitterrand, who is one of France's most experienced and talented debaters, is complex. The Communists, involved in a power struggle with the Socialists, undoubtedly timed their play to influence the outcome of next Tuesday's left summit. Communist leaders also desired to head off criticism within the party from long-time members who fear that the party is compromising too much with the Socialists. There may also have been a certain amount of miscalculation.

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[] The Communist estimate of the cost of the common program advocated by the left is nearly \$100 billion--half again as large as the government's 1977 budget. The program would produce a massive and rapid transfer of income to the lower end of the wage scale, and would be financed by a magically more efficient business sector and higher taxes on the wealthy. Most of the French public would view the program as highly inflationary.

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[] Charles Fiterman, the Communist negotiator involved in updating the common program, said that his party had published the estimates to answer the Socialists' allegations that the Communist proposals were utopian. The incident is, however, only the most visible example of friction within the left alliance that has been sparked by the Communists. Signs of this friction include:

--The Communist refusal to back Socialist national secretary Robert Pontillon in his bid to retain his seat on the Paris regional council. He was replaced by a Communist.

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--The Communists' unrelenting campaign, which included workers' rallies throughout Lorraine, for nationalization of the steel industry.

--A tougher action program by the Communist-controlled labor federation, which called for national strikes on April 28 and May 24 to back wage demands.

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[] The Socialists believe that the Communist Party's tougher line is due to its need to maintain a distinct identity for itself and remain clearly separated from the Socialists in the public mind.

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[] The Communists believe that a blurring of the lines between the two--furthered by joint lists in the recent municipal elections--leads party members to be less militant and causes an eventual transfer of votes from the Communists to the Socialists. By getting out ahead of the Socialists by promising more than that party can realistically commit itself to deliver--such as the virtual elimination of unemployment within five years--the Communists presumably hope to strengthen their appeal to the voters.

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[] The Communists cannot afford to let the Socialists assume the role of sole spokesman for the left. They may have felt--shortsightedly--that Mitterrand was stealing too much of the limelight for his televised debate with Barre and needed to be brought down a notch. The Communists, nonetheless, have a keen interest in resolving their policy differences with the Socialists, as they have indicated by their recent conciliatory statements on the European Parliament and the French nuclear force.

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USSR-INDIA: Pavlovsky Visit

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[] *//The USSR's decision to send the commander of its ground forces, General Pavlovsky, to India later this month is primarily another sign of Soviet concern about Indian attitudes toward the USSR in the wake of ex-prime minister Gandhi's election defeat. Soviet military aid presumably will be discussed.*//

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[] *//The Indian military leadership has not changed as a result of the election, but it was never as favorably*

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disposed toward the USSR as was Gandhi, and the Soviets probably are concerned that the Indian military will be less amenable now to closer cooperation. Pavlovsky apparently has had an invitation for some time but accepted it only recently.//

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[REDACTED] //Soviet courtship of India's military leaders intensified after the signing of the Friendship Treaty in 1971. The Indian military appreciates Moscow's willingness to provide a wide range of sophisticated military hardware for its navy and air force, but it tries to prevent the Soviets from gaining any influence with Indian troops.//

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[REDACTED] //The military leadership limits both the number of Indians sent to the USSR for training and the size of the Soviet military advisory group in India. Although India is one of the largest recipients of Soviet military aid in the third world, no more than 300 Soviet military advisers are estimated to be stationed there. This compares to the 1,200 Soviet military advisers stationed in Iraq and 2,500 in Syria.//

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[REDACTED] //For years the USSR has pressed India to grant special port privileges for the Soviet navy and landing rights for reconnaissance-configured TU-95s. Even under the Gandhi government, however, the Indians always denied these requests.

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ISRAEL: West Bank

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[] *Marches planned by the Israeli right-wing extremist Gush Emunim organization throughout the West Bank tomorrow could lead to renewed violence.*

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[] The actions are intended to commemorate Israel's capture of East Jerusalem in the 1967 war and to confront the government and West Bank Arabs once again with the Gush's long-standing demand that Jews be allowed to settle anywhere in the occupied territory. The marches, which are scheduled to end with rallies in Jerusalem, are certain to spark counterdemonstrations by Arabs who adamantly oppose the Gush's philosophy on settlements.

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[] Changes in Israeli tactics, including the use of non-lethal ammunition, censorship of sensational news stories, and selective curfews, have helped to maintain an uneasy calm on the West Bank since the violent antigovernment protests of last spring that left 10 Arabs dead. This calm, however, was marred earlier this month when two Arabs were killed by Israeli troops

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during demonstrations against a new Gush settlement located in the most heavily Arab-populated region of the northern West Bank.

25X1 [] West Bank Arabs see the government's approval of the Gush settlement as proof their long-standing suspicion is correct that the government supports the Gush's settlement program. Outrage over this, combined with rumors that the government may approve another Gush site and recent provocative attempts by the leader of the militant Jewish Defense League to travel on the West Bank, have further strained Arab tempers and generally heightened tensions throughout the area. []

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IRAQ: A Tour of the Gulf

25X1 [] *//A high-level Iraqi delegation returned to Baghdad this week after a 10-day tour of Persian Gulf states aimed mainly at improving bilateral relations. The Gulf states in most instances rejected Iraqi overtures and complained that Iraq continues to meddle in the internal affairs of its neighbors.//*

25X1 [] The delegation was headed by Minister of Interior Izzat Ibrahim al-Duri, one of the more powerful political figures in Iraq. He hoped to sign economic and trade agreements, to promote bilateral security arrangements, and to discuss oil price increases, oil exploration, and access to Kuwaiti ports.

25X1 [] *//The Kuwaitis refused even to discuss new agreements until their long-standing border disputes with Iraq are settled and Iraq removes its small military contingent that since 1973 has occupied Kuwaiti territory along the border. Iraq also claims two Kuwaiti islands strategically located opposite Iraq's ports.*

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Iraq also used the trip to promote its version of a Gulf security arrangement, which is sharply at odds with a plan pushed by the Shah of Iran. Iran wants a collective pact that would control entry into the Gulf by all foreign shipping. Iraq fears that Iran's large navy would control Gulf waters, and emphasizes protection of "freedom of navigation" and reliance on bilateral security arrangements.

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Duri's mission was also hurt by recent statements by Iraq's leaders that seemed to demonstrate an unwillingness to make the political adjustments necessary to reduce Iraq's political isolation.

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[REDACTED] President Bakr warned in a May Day speech of an increasing onslaught by imperialist, Zionist, and reactionary forces; although the speech was largely for domestic consumption, Bakr's use of Baathist codewords for the governments of Syria, the US, and the Gulf states could hardly have furthered Duri's goal of improving relations.

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[REDACTED] Kuwaiti leaders must have noted with alarm recent statements by Iraqi leader Saddam Husayn to the effect that Iraq has the right to intervene in Kuwait to meet unspecified "threats to that country."

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[REDACTED] //Iraqi Minister of State Abdallah, one of three communist ministers in the government, stressed during a recent visit to South Yemen Iraq's ideological compatibility with Aden's Marxist government. Iraq has also pressed for an alliance with Libya, Algeria, Somalia, and South Yemen to counter attempts by the US and moderate Arab governments to work out a settlement in the Middle East.//

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[] An Iraqi delegation, possibly to be headed by Saddam Husayn, will visit Iran next month to discuss bilateral issues. Until the Baathist government disavows support for Gulf radicals, however, its conservative neighbors will remain highly suspicious of Iraqi intentions. []

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GHANA: Student Protests

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[] //University students in Accra and two other cities in Ghana staged antigovernment demonstrations yesterday to embarrass the increasingly unpopular military regime headed by General Acheampong while UN Ambassador Young was visiting the country. The ambassador's visit proceeded as planned, and he reportedly did not encounter any demonstrators.//

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[] //Police armed with batons kept the situation in hand in Accra, and no serious casualties have been reported. The students called on Acheampong to resign and to return Ghana to civilian rule. They were protesting Acheampong's plans for structural changes in the government that would result in his installation as president, a title that only Kwame Nkrumah has held as Ghanaian chief of state. The students were also calling attention to Ghana's spiraling inflation and other serious economic problems Acheampong has not been able to handle.//

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[] //The demonstrations are the most serious by students since Acheampong seized power in January 1972 and promised to resolve Ghana's chronic economic difficulties. Acheampong may retaliate harshly against the students; strong measures could spark more widespread unrest and open fissures within the military that could lead to a change of government.

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SOUTH AFRICA: Demonstrations

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[] Another round of demonstrations may start next week in Soweto, the black township outside Johannesburg, South Africa. Violence next week would strengthen prospects for serious disorders in June, the anniversary of last year's extensive rioting.

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[] Police in Soweto have gone on full alert because of reports that a demonstration is planned in an attempt to embarrass Prime Minister Vorster during his meeting next week with Vice President Mondale in Vienna. At the same time, the militant Student Representative Council in the black township has provoked a near break with the moderate Urban Bantu Council, a government-sponsored black advisory body. The student group has called for the resignation of the council members, who are regarded as government stooges. One did resign yesterday, citing fear of student threats.

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[] Student demands to release two youths detained by police at the Urban Bantu Council headquarters pose a problem for the white Soweto police chief, whose relatively soft tactics in dealing with recent demonstrations have helped prevent violence. The police cannot afford an appearance of giving in to student demands.

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[] The key to whether the next demonstrations are violent or peaceful may lie in the caliber of current student leadership. Several student leaders were either arrested or fled the country last year and earlier this year, leaving the Student Representative Council in the hands of less effective leaders,

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[] In the last demonstrations in Soweto over rent hikes, police and students actually fraternized at times.

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[] If new militant student leaders have emerged, they could force the police to react harshly during a demonstration, which could provoke violent reactions from the students as happened last year. There are some indications, including the current squabble with the Urban Bantu Council, that militant students are reasserting themselves.

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[] June 16 is the anniversary of the beginning of last year's riots, which spread to many parts of the country and took over 100 lives in the first week alone. The violence re-occurred periodically for several months. Plans are already afoot to hold commemorative demonstrations next month that could involve a wide range of black political and social organizations. Some are already calling for a national day of prayer with a march through Soweto; others speak of the commemoration as "Christmas in June," and suggest that everyone boycott classes or jobs.

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Police are particularly apprehensive about the possibilities for a large march through Soweto, but are planning to use the soft tactics that have worked well so far in preventing violence. Even so, armored vehicles will be in position to help in crowd control, and police will carry arms as well as clubs and tear gas. The police chief admits that not all his superiors have approved of his approach to handling demonstrations.

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